

# **1.1. Structure of the test**

- The test doesn't require that you know certain works of literature
- It doesn't require you to know about historical contexts
- It does, however, assume that you have read a good amount of poetry, drama and prose.

- This test assumes you have a “broad knowledge of literature”
- It also assumes you have a “familiarity with basic literary terminology”
- This course is equivalent to two semesters of a college foundations course on literature.

80 multiple choice questions to be answered in 98 minutes. Some of these are pretest questions and will not be scored.

There is also an optional essay section. You have to write two essays in 90 minutes.

- One essay is an analysis of a short poem.
- The other essay is on a generalization (technique, function, etc.) on literature applied to a novel, short story or play.

## **1.2 What we will do**

In this class we will:

- Go over each genre (poetry, drama and prose) and review key terms and examples.
- Discuss some strategies for writing the essays

## **1.3. What you need to demonstrate**

The official CLEP guidelines explain you must “demonstrate the following abilities”:

- “Ability to read prose, poetry and drama with understanding”
- “Ability to analyze the elements of a literary passage and to respond to nuances of meaning, tone, imagery and style”

- “Ability to interpret metaphors, to recognize rhetorical and stylistic devices, to perceive relationships between parts and wholes, and to grasp a speaker’s or author’s attitudes“

- “Knowledge of the means by which literary effects are achieved”
- “Familiarity with the basic terminology used to discuss literary texts”

## **1.4 Breakdown of the test**

CLEP guidelines also explain that the test is about these topics and percentages:

Genre

35%–45% Poetry

35%–45% Prose (fiction and nonfiction)

15%–30% Drama

## National Tradition

50%–65% British  
Literature

30%–45% American  
Literature

5%–15% Works in  
Translation

## Period

3%–7% Classical and pre-Renaissance

20%–30% Renaissance and 17th Century

35%–45% 18th and 19th Centuries

25%–35% 20th and 21st Centuries

## **2.1. Poetry: why?**

Even though a poem may be short,  
most of the time you can't read it  
fast.

It's like molasses. Or ketchup.

With poetry, there are so many  
things to take into consideration.  
There is the aspect of how it  
sounds, of what it means, and  
often of how it looks.

In some circles, there is a certain aversion to poetry. Some consider it outdated, too difficult, or not worth the time.

They ask: Why does it take so long to read something so short?

Well, yes, it is if you are used to Twitter, or not used to poetry.

Think about the connections poetry has to music. Couldn't you consider some of your favorite lyrics poetry?

2Pac, for example, wrote a book of poetry called *The Rose that Grew from Concrete*.

At many points in history across many cultures, poetry was considered the highest form of expression.

Why do people write poetry?

Because they want to and because they can...

(taking the idea from Federico García Lorca in his poem “Lucía Martínez”:  
“porque quiero, y porque puedo”)

You ask yourself: Why do I need to read poetry?

Because you are going to take the CLEP exam.

Once you move beyond that, it will be easier.

Some reasons why we write/read poetry:

- To become aware
- To see things in a different way
- To put together a mental jigsaw puzzle
- To move the senses
- To provoke emotions
- To find order

## **2.2. Poetry: how?**

If you are not familiar with poetry, you should definitely practice reading some before you take the exam. Here are some ideas of what you can do:

- Make a list of poems you know. This can be from anything from nursery rhymes to song lyrics to classic poems. Think about what might link them to poetry and what separates them from other types of writing.

- Find a classic poem unknown to you. You can select one of the ones mentioned in this class or one from an anthology of poetry. The reason why it is recommended that you take one from an anthology is because its selection of poems is more likely to have more things to look at.

- What you should look for in the poem: rhyme, punctuation, grammar, word selection, rhetorical techniques, multiple meanings.
- Write your own poem. Think about what makes it easy or hard for you to write it.

Even if you have had little exposure to poetry in the past, my aim is that as you review this material multiple times, you will understand more about poetry and recognize poets and poems in the process.

## **2.3. Poetry: tone**

The **tone** of the poem can be like the tone of anything else, and only a few words can sway the feeling:

Robert Frost, “The Road Not Taken”

*I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence:*

Henry David Thoreau, “Inspiration”

*A clear and ancient harmony  
Pierces my soul through all its din*

Dylan Thomas, "Not From This  
Anger"

*Not from this anger, anticlimax  
after*

*Refusal struck her loin and the  
lame flower*

*Bent like a beast to lap the singular  
floods*

*In a land strapped by hunger*

*Shall she receive a bellyful of weeds*

Hafiz, “All the Hemispheres”

*Open up to the Roof.*

*Make a new water-mark on your  
excitement*

*And love.*

*Like a blooming night flower,  
Bestow your vital fragrance of  
Happiness and giving  
Upon our intimate assembly.*

The **tone** of the poem can vary greatly.

Check out the amount of different tones the poem can take on in the Canadian Poetry in Voice website!

<http://www.poetryinvoicem.com/teachers/lesson-plans/tone-map/tone-list>

## **2.4. Poetry: verse and rhyme**

Let's take a look at all these components of verse and rhyme:

- verse
- stanza
- rhyme scheme
- end rhyme/ internal rhyme
- slant rhyme
- masculine rhyme/ feminine rhyme
- free verse
- blank verse

## Verse and stanza:

- **Verse:** a verse is a line in a poem
- **Stanza:** a stanza is a group of verses, like a “paragraph” within a poem, many times with some sort of meter and order.

Verse and stanza

Emily Dickinson, "A Bird, came down the Walk"

*A Bird, came down the Walk -  
He did not know I saw -  
He bit an Angle Worm in halves  
And ate the fellow, raw,*

*And then, he drank a Dew  
From a convenient Grass -  
And then hopped sidewise to the Wall  
To let a Beetle pass -*

Rhyme scheme – a rhyme scheme is a pattern that the rhymes in a poem follow. Here are a few examples:

### **ABAB rhyme**

Robert Frost, “Neither Out Far Nor Deep”

*The people along the sand  
All turn and look one way.  
They turn their back on the land.  
They look at the sea all day.*

Another example:

**ABBA rhyme**

John Milton, “On His Being Arrived  
to the Age of Twenty-Three”

*Perhaps my semblance might  
deceive the truth,  
That I to manhood am arrived so  
near,  
And inward ripeness doth much less  
appear,  
That some more timely-happy  
spirits indu'th.*

## Internal rhyme and End rhyme

### **Internal rhyme:**

Edgar Allen Poe, *The Raven*

*Once upon a midnight  
dreary, while I pondered,  
weak and weary,*

## Internal rhyme and End rhyme

### **End rhyme:**

William Blake, "The Angel"

*I dreamt a dream! What can it mean?*

*And that I was a maiden Queen*

*Guarded by an Angel mild:*

*Witless woe was ne'er beguiled!*

A **slant rhyme** (also called half rhyme, near rhyme, imperfect rhyme, oblique rhyme) is when the stressed syllables of the consonants match but the preceding vowels don't:

*Slant rhyme:*

Emily Dickinson, "Hope Is the Thing  
with Feathers"

*"Hope" is the thing with feathers  
That perches in the soul  
And sings the tune without the words  
And never stops at all,*

This is not only found in poetry, but  
also in hip-hop. Artists like Notorious  
B.I.G. and Nas have used it.

**Masculine and  
Feminine rhyme.** These  
are not modern terms,  
but you may run into  
them in your studies.

**Feminine rhyme** (double rhyme): a rhyme that matches two or more syllables. The final syllable(s) is/are unstressed, and it is usually at the end of the line.

William Wordsworth, "London, 1802"

*Milton! thou shouldst be living at this hour:  
England hath need of thee: she is a fen  
Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and pen,  
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and  
bower,  
Have forfeited their ancient English dower*

**Masculine rhyme:** a rhyme that matches only one syllable. Usually, the final syllable is stressed, and it is usually at the end of the line. These are the majority of all rhymes in English-language poetry.

John Donne, “Death be not proud”

*Death, be not proud, though some have  
called thee*

*Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so;  
For those whom thou think'st thou dost  
overthrow*

*Die not, poor Death, nor yet canst thou kill  
me.*

*From rest and sleep, which but thy pictures  
be,*

**Free verse** (from *vers libre* in French)

It doesn't follow a regular meter or rhythm. It's the closest form to imitating conversation.

Walt Whitman, "A Noiseless, Patient Spider"

A noiseless, patient spider,

I mark'd, where, on a little promontory, it stood,  
isolated;

Mark'd how, to explore the vacant, vast surrounding,  
It launch'd forth filament, filament, filament, out of  
itself;

Ever unreeling them—ever tirelessly speeding them.

## **Blank verse**

This is a verse that does not rhyme, written in iambic pentameter (10 syllables). It is used in poems and dramas. It is often used in character monologues.

William Shakespeare, "Macbeth"

*Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow,  
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,  
To the last syllable of recorded time;  
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools*

## **2.5. Poetry: meter**

## Meter:

- meter
- iambic pentameter
- iambic meter
- iambic foot
- anapest
- trochee

The **meter** is the pattern of stressed words in a verse. Reading aloud if possible is better than in your head because the stress falls on syllables. Natural speech usually falls on the stress points.

Shakespeare, "Sonnet 18"

*Shall I compare thee to a summer's  
day?*

If the pattern is stressed then unstressed in sequence, then that is called **iambic rhythm**. If the whole verse follows this structure, then that's referred to as the **iambic meter**. The most common of these is the **iambic pentameter** (five stresses, ten syllables in all).

John Milton, *Paradise Lost*

*Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,  
That with no middle flight intends to soar.*

If an iambic pentameter has 5 stressed syllables, how many stresses do these have?:

- Hexameter
- Diameter
- Heptameter
- Octameter
- Tetrameter
- Monometer
- Trimeter

If an iambic pentameter has 5 stressed syllables, how many stresses do these have?:

- Hexameter - 6
- Diameter - 2
- Heptameter - 7
- Octameter - 8
- Tetrameter - 4
- Monometer - 1
- Trimeter - 3

Other types of meter are:

**Anapest** – unstressed, unstressed,  
stressed:

*Twas the night before Christmas  
when all through the house.*

**Trochee** – stressed, unstressed:

*Double, double, toil and trouble;  
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.*

## **2.6.1 Poetry: form**

**Form** is the design of a  
poem.

**Closed form** (fixed form) follows a set design in meter and verse. Poets must follow the patterns and structure with this form. An example of this is the **sonnet** (explained in future slides):

**Open form** poetry, as the name holds, does not follow the rules of established poetic structures of meter and verse. There are no regular stanza structures. Sometimes they can be tricky because they may have some elements of pattern in sound or words. Open form is sometimes considered free verse, but others disagree and state that there are some differences.

**Concrete poetry**, also called shape poetry, is when the poem itself takes on a physical form. This can help the reader understand more of the poet's thinking.

**Concrete poetry:** Here is an example of Guillaume de Apollinaire's *Calligrammes* from 1918.

S  
A  
LUT  
M  
O N  
D E  
DONT  
JE SUIS  
LA LAN  
GUE É  
LOQUEN  
TE QUESA  
BOUCHE  
O PARIS  
TIRE ET TIRERA  
TOU JOURS  
AUX AL  
LEM ANDS

## **2.6.2 Poetry: types of poetry**

## Different types of poems

- sonnet
- octave/ sestet/ quatrains/ couplets
- heroic couplet
- alexandrine
- mock-heroic
- epic
- ballads – ballad stanza, literary ballads
- elegy
- ode
- villanelle
- epigram
- doggerel
- limerick
- Aubade

## **2.6.2.1 Poetry: types of poetry - Sonnet**

The **sonnet** is perhaps the most famous of poetry forms. They are 14 lines, usually in iambic pentameter. There are two types of main sonnets, the Petrarchan sonnet and the Shakespearean sonnet.

The **Petrarchan sonnet** is a poem made up two major sections, a major group of 8 lines (the octave) and a minor group of six lines (the sestet). The rhyme scheme is usually *abba abba cde cde*.

## **Petrarchan sonnet**

Milton, "On His Blindness"

*When I consider how my light is spent (a)*

*Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide, (b)*

*And that one talent which is death to hide, (b)*

*Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent  
(a)*

*To serve therewith my Maker, and present (a)*

*My true account, lest he returning chide; (b)*

*"Doth God exact day-labor, light denied?" (b)*

*I fondly ask; but Patience to prevent (a)*

*That murmur, soon replies, "God doth not need (c)*

*Either man's work or his own gifts; who best (d)*

*Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state (e)*

*Is Kingly. Thousands at his bidding speed (c)*

*And post o'er land and ocean without rest; (d)*

*They also serve who only stand and wait." (e)*

The **Shakespearean sonnet** is a poem made up three quatrains (a verse of four lines) and a couplet (a verse of two lines). The rhyme scheme usually is *abab cdcd efef gg*.

## **Shakespearean sonnet**

Shakespeare, "Sonnet IX"

*Is it for fear to wet a widow's eye  
That thou consumest thyself in single life?  
Ah! if thou issueless shalt hap to die.  
The world will wail thee, like a makeless wife;  
The world will be thy widow and still weep  
That thou no form of thee hast left behind,  
When every private widow well may keep  
By children's eyes her husband's shape in mind.  
Look, what an unthrift in the world doth spend  
Shifts but his place, for still the world enjoys it;  
But beauty's waste hath in the world an end,  
And kept unused, the user so destroys it.  
No love toward others in that bosom sits  
That on himself such murderous shame commits.*

**Octave** – eight lines of iambic pentameter (or of hendecasyllables – 11 syllables - in the Italian style). The most common rhyme scheme is *abba abba*. It's the first part of a Shakespearean sonnet.

**Sestet** – generally the second division of a Shakespearean sonnet, which consists of 6 lines.

## **2.6.2.2. Poetry: types of poetry – some more stanzas**

**Quatrain** – this can be a stanza or a type of poem that consists of 4 lines.

**Couplet** – two lines usually with the same rhyme and meter

From the couplet the **heroic couplet** emerged. This is a traditional form for English poetry which was used in narrative and **epic poetry**. You can see this example in Geoffrey Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*:

*Whan that aprill with his shoures  
soote  
The droghte of march hath perced  
to the roote,*

## **2.6.2.3. Poetry: types of poetry - Epic poetry**

The **epic poem** is a long narrative poem usually about the heroic deeds of a person or nation, like Homer's *The Odyssey* or *The Iliad*. These are super long, so I would imagine you would only be given an excerpt to analyze.

The **epic poem** is usually in the form of a couplet with the same rhyme structure, as that was the easiest way for the travelling bards to sing them as they went from town to town in medieval times.

The **mock epic** (mock heroic) is written in heroic couplets, as we see here with Alexander Pope's, "the Rape of the Lock"

*This lock, the Muse shall  
consecrate to fame,  
And mid'st the stars  
inscribe Belinda's name!*

## **2.6.2.4. Poetry: types of poetry - Ballads**

Another old type of poetry is the **ballad**. These were sung in medieval times and have been popular ever since. They are usually anonymous and not complicated. The verses are generally short and narrate a personal story about love, hate, knights, fantasy, etc. Like the epic, they generally hold simple form and repetition.

Here we see an old English **ballad** entitled  
"The Douglas Tragedy"

*"RISE up, rise up, now, Lord Douglas," she  
says,*

*"And put on your armour so bright;  
Sweet William will hae Lady Margaret awi'  
Before that it be light.*

*"Rise up, rise up, my seven bold sons,  
And put on your armour so bright,  
And take better care of your youngest sistèr,  
For your eldest's awa' the last night."*

From the ballad there developed the **ballad stanza**, which is *acbc* rhyme of four lines. 1 and 3 have eight syllables and 2 and 4 have 6. Here we have Samuel Taylor Coleridge in “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner”:

*All in a hot and copper sky!  
The bloody Sun, at noon,  
Right up above the mast did  
stand,  
No bigger than the Moon.*

## **2.6.2.5. Poetry: types of poetry - Lyrical poetry**

Aristotle pointed out three broad categories of poetry: dramatic, narrative and lyrical. We have discussed narrative poetry to a certain extent, as seen in epic poetry. Let's take a look now at **lyrical poetry**.

From Greek times to modern times, **lyrical poetry** has been popular with many poets because it involves emotions and feelings. It is more personal than other types of poetry and is mostly in first person.

One type of lyrical poem is the **elegy**. It is a sad poem usually written to praise or weep for someone who has passed. It is similar to the *eulogy*, which is a speech for someone at a funeral. Elegies can also be about a lost love or a lost time.

Another type of lyrical poem is the **ode**, similar to the elegy, but usually to praise someone or something. It is not limited to the theme of death or loss. It can have complex stanza forms and there are many types of odes.

Here we have part of John  
Keat's, "Ode to a Nightingale":

*My heart aches, and a drowsy  
numbness pains*

*My sense, as though of  
hemlock I had drunk,  
Or emptied some dull opiate to  
the drains*

*One minute past, and  
Lethe-wards had sunk:  
'Tis not through envy of thy  
happy lot,*

Another poetic form is the **villanelle**. It has nineteen lines of five *tercets* (a stanza of three lines) followed by a *quatrain* (a stanza of four lines). There are two **refrains** (a line repeated in verse) and two repeating lines. This is a *fixed verse* form.

Here is an example of the **villanelle**.  
This is Sylvia Plath's "Mad Girl's Love  
Song"

I shut my eyes and all the world drops  
dead,  
I lift my lids and all is born again.  
(I think I made you up inside my head)

The stars go waltzing out in blue and  
red,  
And arbitrary darkness gallops in.  
I shut my eyes and all the world drops  
dead.

## **2.6.2.6. Poetry: types of poetry - Sestina**

Even more confining in its form than the villanelle is the **sestina**. It is a closed form of six stanzas of six lines each, followed by three lines. The end words of each verse of the first stanza are then used to end subsequent stanzas, rotated in a pattern

Here is the pattern of the  
sestina:

- 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 6 1 5 2 4 3
- 3 6 4 1 2 5
- 5 3 2 6 1 4
- 4 5 1 3 6 2
- 2 4 6 5 3 1
- (6 2) (1 4) (5 3)

Here is an example of the **sestina** in W.H. Auden's "Paysage Moralisé" (first two stanzas only):

*Hearing of harvests rotting in the valleys,  
Seeing at end of street the barren mountains,  
Round corners coming suddenly on water,  
Knowing them shipwrecked who were launched for  
islands,  
We honour founders of these starving cities  
Whose honour is the image of our sorrow,*

*Which cannot see its likeness in their sorrow  
That brought them desperate to the brink of  
valleys;  
Dreaming of evening walks through learned cities  
They reined their violent horses on the mountains,  
Those fields like ships to castaways on islands,  
Visions of green to them who craved for water.*

## **2.6.2.7. Poetry: types of poetry – others**

The **Alexandrine** verse is a classic French verse from the 12<sup>th</sup> century that has been used over time by other poets. Most alexandrines are made up of two **hemistich** sections (these are half lines) of six syllables each.

These two sections are broken up by a **caesura** (a word break or a syntactic break). They are rare in English, but they do exist. Here is one in French by Nicolas Boileau, in *L'Art poétique*:

*Que toujours, dans vos vers le sens coupant les  
mots,  
Suspende l'hémistiche, en marque le repos.*

An **epigram** is a short, witty saying in verse with a satirical twist at the end. Famous poets such as John Donne, Alexander Pope, Lord Byron, Ezra Pound, Voltaire, William Butler Yeats, among others, wrote them. Here is one by Taylor Coleridge:

*Sir, I admit your general  
rule,*

*That every poet is a  
fool,*

*But you yourself may  
serve to show it,*

*That every fool is not a  
poet.*

A **doggerel** is a poem  
that has an irregular  
rhythm and rhyme,  
sometimes on purpose,  
sometimes not.

A **doggerel** example. By William McGonagall's "The Tay Bridge Disaster":

*It must have been an awful sight,  
To witness in the dusky moonlight,  
While the Storm Fiend did laugh, and angry did bray,  
Along the Railway Bridge of the Silv'ry Tay,  
Oh! ill-fated Bridge of the Silv'ry Tay,  
I must now conclude my lay  
By telling the world fearlessly without the least dismay,  
That your central girders would not have given way,  
At least many sensible men do say,  
Had they been supported on each side with buttresses,  
At least many sensible men confesses,  
For the stronger we our houses do build,  
The less chance we have of being killed.*

A doggerel written on purpose is the **limerick**. This is a stanza of five lines. The first, second and fifth lines rhyme. Here is an anonymous one:

*There once was a young lady named  
bright  
Whose speed was much faster than  
light  
She set out one day  
In a relative way  
And returned on the previous night.*

Some poetry styles connected with the time of day are the *aubade* and the *serenade*. The **aubade** is a morning love song/poem, or one about lovers in separation at that hour. The **serenade** is the evening love song/poem. Here is an excerpt of John Donne's aubade "The Rising Sun":

## **Aubade**

*Busy old fool, unruly sun,*

*Why dost thou thus,*

*Through windows, and through  
curtains call on us?*

*Must to thy motions lovers'  
seasons run?*

## **2.7 Poetry: meaning**

**Denotation** –the direct meaning of a word or expression. It is the explicit and literal meaning of that word.

**Connotation** – the indirect meaning of the word, what is implied.

*Denotation and  
connotation*

Think about the  
difference between these  
words:

House/ home

Expensive/ pricey

Slender/ thin/ skinny

## Denotation and connotation

Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer, "Rima VII"

*In the dark corner of the room,  
perhaps forgotten by its owner,  
silent and covered with dust,  
one can see a harp.*

*How many notes sleep in its cords,  
like the bird that sleeps in the  
branches,  
waiting for a snowy white hand  
that can awaken them!*

**Symbol** – when the words represent a concept, relationship or object.

Some **stock symbols** are easily recognizable: the rose, a flag, a skull, white, etc.

The next level is  
observing symbols in  
poetry, Check out this  
poem “Poetic Art” by  
Vicente Huidobro:

*Verse is like a key  
That opens a thousand doors  
A page turns, something takes flight  
How many believing eyes look  
And the hearing soul remains trembling*

*Invent new worlds and care for their word  
The adjective, when it does not give life, kills  
We are in a cycle of nerves  
The muscle cluster,  
Like I remember, in the museums;  
No more do but we have less force;  
The true vigor  
Resides in the mind*

*Why do you the rose, oh poets!  
It will flourish in the poem*

*Only for us  
Live all things under the sun*

The poet is a small god.

Think, for example,  
about:

- Denotation
- Connotation
- Symbol

For the word “Table”

## **2.8 Poetry: more on construction**

What makes a poem a poem? Most of all language and how it is used. At the beginning of all this, I said that poetry was like molasses, or ketchup. That would be an example of **figurative language**.

We always have to think about **diction** (word choice) and **syntax** (grammar).

Diction is always important.

Modern poets, however, have had more flexibility in manipulating syntax because they are not restricted by closed form.

Check out this poem “To Roosevelt” by Rubén Darío

It is with the voice of the Bible, or the verse of Walt Whitman,  
that I should come to you, Hunter,  
primitive and modern, simple and complicated,  
with something of Washington and more of Nimrod.

You are the United States,  
you are the future invader  
of the naive America that has Indian blood,  
that still prays to Jesus Christ and still speaks Spanish.

You are the proud and strong exemplar of your race;  
you are cultured, you are skillful; you oppose Tolstoy.  
And breaking horses, or murdering tigers,  
you are an Alexander-Nebuchadnezzar.  
(You are a professor of Energy  
as today's madmen say.)

You think that life is fire, that  
that progress is eruption,  
that wherever you shoot  
you hit the future.

No.

The United States is potent and great.  
When you shake there is a deep tremblor

Getting back to talking  
about rhymes, these are  
two words you should  
learn:

**Assonance** and  
**Consonance**

**Assonance** is the repetition of vowel sounds so that there is internal rhyming in verses. Here is an example by E.E. Cummings:

*On a proud round cloud in  
white high night*

**Consonance** is the repetition of identical or similar consonants. This is the counterpart of assonance. Here is an example from William Blake's "The Chimney Sweeper"

*When my mother died I was  
very young,  
And my father sold me  
while yet my tongue  
Could scarcely cry " 'weep!  
'weep! 'weep! 'weep!"  
So your chimneys I sweep &  
in soot I sleep.*

## **2.9 Poetry: Rhetorical techniques**

**Metaphor** – a figure of speech that refers to one thing by mentioning another.

“All the world’s a stage”

“Pig” (dead metaphor)

**Simile** – a  
comparison using  
“like” or “as”.

“Your teeth are like  
pearls”

**Allusion** – a figure of speech that makes reference to an event, a place or a person.

“That is her Achilles’ heel.”

“What an Eden that place was.”

**Personification** – giving human characteristics to a thing or an abstraction.

“The wind carried me home”

“The sun crept through the shades.”

**Alliteration** is the repetition of similar sounds (like we saw in consonance and assonance)

“She sells sea shells by the seashore”

**Apostrophe** is when a writer detaches herself from reality and talks to an imaginary character, like with this example from *Macbeth*:

*Is this a dagger which I see before  
me,  
The handle toward my hand?  
Come, let me clutch thee!  
I have thee not, and yet I see thee  
still.*

**Hyperbole** – an  
exaggeration  
(overstatement).

“I’m starving”

“I was going 1000 miles  
an hour to get here on  
time”

**Irony** – when intended meaning is different from actual meaning.

When someone puts their high beams in your face, you say,  
“Great, now I can see better”

**Metonymy** – when a thing or concept is not called by its name but rather by a **metonym**.

“Dish”

“Ivy League”

**Onomatopoeia** – the formation of words that sound like the object to which they refer.

“Chickadee”

“Bobwhite”

“Buzz”

“Cuckoo”

**Oxymoron** – when a seemingly self-contradictory effect is produced.

“Pretty ugly”

“Jumbo shrimp”

“Dark light”

**Paradox** – another self-contradictory statement, but one that might express a truth. For example, from George Orwell's *Animal Farm*"

"All animals are equal, but some are more equal than others"

**Sarcasm** - the use of words that mean the opposite of what you want to say, usually to show irritation or be funny.

“I work around the clock so I can be poor”

“Not the sharpest tool in the shed”

**Synecdoche** – when  
the part is taken for the  
whole, or vice versa.

“Nice wheels”

“Ask for her hand in  
marriage”

Answer these general questions on poetry (from the same text)

- <https://clep.collegeboard.org/exam/literature/questions/6>
- <https://clep.collegeboard.org/exam/literature/questions/7>
- <https://clep.collegeboard.org/exam/literature/questions/8>
- <https://clep.collegeboard.org/exam/literature/questions/9>

Answer questions 6-10 (which are all from the same text) on poetry from the CLEP 2016 Examination Guide on Analyzing and Interpreting Literature.

Answer questions 1-10 of the “20 supplemental questions”

# **3. Prose**

## **Everything is connected**

We look at prose after poetry and before drama, but please keep in mind that even though these are three separate sections, much what we covered in poetry will be important in prose and drama, just like much of what we will cover now in prose can be applied to the other genres.

## **For example...**

What we studied about *rhetorical techniques* in poetry will be important in the prose and drama sections, and what we will study about literary movements in prose will be important to understand poetry and drama.

## **3.1. Prose: what is it?**

# **What is prose?**

It's not poetry: there is no versification or rhyme in its form; however, there are many similar factors to consider, such as diction, syntax and literary devices.

**Prose is most**  
everything else we  
read day to day:  
magazine articles,  
commentaries, essays,  
novels, short stories,  
memoirs, biographies,  
textbooks...

We can separate prose into **fiction** and **non-fiction**. In general terms, *fiction* is what is invented and *non-fiction* is what is recorded. Novels and short stories are examples of fiction; biographies and most essays are examples of non-fiction. There can be, nevertheless, overlapping elements of fiction and non-fiction (with historical fiction, for example).

## **3.2. Prose: why?**

## *Why do people **write** prose?*

Basically, for many of the same reasons why people write poetry:

- To move the senses
- To provoke emotions
- To find order
- To show something

But people **write** prose also because:

- They prefer one genre over another
- It is more familiar to them
- It is more ubiquitous and thus perhaps more approachable
- They believe that narrative flows better in prose than in verse

But people **write** prose also because:

- They have a *story to tell* (short story or novel) and *not a song to sing* (poetry)
- It is seen as more direct and less “beat around the bush”
- What they want to say is best done in prose (criticism, exposition, argument, etc.).  
After all, newspapers, journals, websites, textbooks and the like are all written in prose.

So why do people **read** prose?

- Because they have to? (not a good reason – unless you hate poetry!)
- Because it's everywhere? – also no a good reason!
- To become informed? Yes!  
Like you are reading this to get ready for the CLEP exam
- But also for pleasure, distraction and escape

### **3.3.1. Prose: the novel – origins**

# The novel

So let's start with discussing the novel. It is a long, fictional narrative in prose that portrays different characters in a complex series of sequential events.

## The novel - origins

Even though prose dates back to the Greek era (Pherecydes of Syros), roots of the novel are found in the 14<sup>th</sup> century with, for example, Boccaccio's *Decamerone* in Italy, Don Juan Manuel's *El conde Lucanor* in Spain, and Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* in England.

## The novel – origins

These texts are based on a series of short tales, or *novelle*, strung together by an external narrative frame (therefore, a **novella** is long than a short story but shorter than a novel).

## The novel – origins

The origin of the novel also stems from the French tales of chivalry that were originally in verse (Chrétien de Troyes) in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The majority of Arthurian legends developed from this and were put in prose a few centuries later (*Amadís de Gaula*), precursors to Cervantes's *Don Quixote*, which is called the first modern novel by some, and the best novel of all times by others.

## The novel – origins

From these early tales of Arthurian romance emerged the romance genre: long, fictitious stories (in verse) of often fantastical events in far off places. From this the word *roman* emerged, the French and base-root word for novel in many languages (Albanian, Danish, Dutch, Norwegian, Romanian, Slovak, etc.).

## The novel – origins

*Don Quixote* is a realist novel, and the Arthurian tradition is based on fantasy. The novel has since been in constant debate between these opposing poles: some novels are realist whilst others have to do with imaginary far away places and scenarios.

### **3.3.3. Prose: the novel – types and movements**

# Types of novels (partial list):

- Fantasy
- Historical fiction
- Romance
- Thrillers
- Science fiction
- Satirical

# Types of novels (partial list):

- Tragedy
- Mystery
- Picaresque
- Gothic
- Psychological
- Best-seller

**Literary movements** (not comprehensive, but as specifically applied to the novel):

- Renaissance
- Baroque
- The Enlightenment
- Romanticism
- Transcendentalism

**Literary movements** (not comprehensive, but as specifically applied to the novel):

- Victorian Literature
- Realism
- Modernism
- Existentialism
- Beat Generation

### **3.3.4. Prose: the novel – analysis**

# Analyzing the novel.

Simplistically, it's looking at the *who*, *what*, *where*, *when*, *how* and *why* of a novel, but let's make more sense of that.

## **Analyzing the novel.**

*Who*- the characters

*What* – the plot in the novel

*Where* – space in the novel  
(setting)

*When* – time in the novel  
(setting)

*How* – language and narration

*Why* – the theme(s) of the  
novel

### **3.3.4.1. Prose: the novel – analysis of characters**

The **characters** in the novel are primordial part of this literary genre. We look for ones that change (*dynamic*) through the ones that don't (*static*), and we follow the actions of the **protagonist**, who develops in a certain way, against the opposing forces of the **antagonist**.

We shouldn't necessarily call the protagonist the "good guy" and the antagonist the "bad guy" because often the writer gives us a different perspective on what's "good" and "bad".

When the characters serve to contrast one another to highlight their characteristics, they serve as **foils**. Some characters may be common conceptions or misconceptions on purpose, **stereotypes** that the author uses are plot devices that he/she may want to work with or redefine.

Many times these stereotypical characters, or **stock characters**, reoccur in specific literary movements and are easily recognizable: the damsel in distress, the mad scientist, the farmer's daughter, the absent-minded professor, the *virgo bellatrix* (woman warrior).

Other times, characters may serve as **allegories** by representing abstract concepts. One of the most salient examples is *Animal Farm* by George Orwell. The animals on the farm are a representation of the 1917 Russian revolution on into the Stalinist era. The animals show the corruption and avarice of the revolution.

## **3.3.4.2. Prose: the novel – analysis of the plot**

**The plot** can be broken down into different stages of development:

- Exposition
- Development
- Climax
- Denouement  
(resolution)

Some refer to the **plot** as:

- Introduction
- Complication
- Rising action
- Climax
- Falling action
- Conclusion

There may also be **subplots** in the main plot, smaller stories with their own development and resolution, but there is just usually one main set of events.

### **3.3.4.3. Prose: the novel – analysis of setting**

When we talk about the **space** of a novel there are a few things to consider. The space can be physical and metaphorical: the food store on 27 Barton Street where the action takes place, as opposed to the significance of the struggling, mom-and-pop, neighborhood grocery store with historical and social significance running against the chokehold of the growing supermarket chain conglomerates.

The same is true when we we talk about **time** in the novel.

The time is when the novel takes place in history, but it also refers to the chronology of events in the novel: are they sequential? Are there flashbacks? Is it fragmented? Is it speculative? Is it immediate?

In addition to space and time, other considerations for **setting** is to look at *mood* and *atmosphere*. Is it positive or negative? Is it controlled or disordered? Is it Gothic or Realist? (this may overlap with its literary genre).

### **3.3.4.4. Prose: the novel – analysis of language**

In regard to **language**, we have to consider all that an author puts into her/his expression: *diction* (word choice), *tone*, *syntax* (grammar and sentence structures), use of *dialogue*, *narrator's* voice, etc. Nathaniel Hawthorne, for example, in *The Scarlet Letter* uses a formal style which is very different from the informal styles of, for example, John Steinbeck or Mark Twain.

## **Language: formal style**

From p. 1 of Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*. Note the use of the passive voice, the formal word choice, the syntax, the diction, the distanced tone, etc.:

## **Language: formal style**

*In accordance with this rule it may safely be assumed that the forefathers of Boston had built the first prison–house somewhere in the Vicinity of Cornhill, almost as seasonably as they marked out the first burial–ground, on Isaac Johnson’s lot, and round about his grave, which subsequently became the nucleus of all the congregated sepulchres in the old churchyard of King’s Chapel.*

## Language: informal style

From chapter 2 of Mark Twain's  
*Huck Finn*:

*“Say, who is you? Whar is you?  
Dog my cats ef I didn’ hear sumf’n.  
Well, I know what I’s gwyne to do:  
I’s gwyne to set down here  
and listen tell I hears it agin.”*

Note the colloquial language, the reproduction of oral speech, the use of dialogue (much more personal), the diction, etc.

## Language

In regard to syntax, punctuation, sentence length and sentence structure all influence one's writing style. Here are some examples. Note the difference between them.

A segment from chapter 18 of *Ulysses*  
by James Joyce:

*and her soul greatest miser ever was  
actually afraid to lay out 4d for her  
methylated spirit telling me all her  
ailments she had too much old chat in  
her about politics and earthquakes  
and the end of the world let us have a  
bit of fun first God help the world if all  
the women were her sort down on  
bathing-suits and lownecks of course  
nobody wanted her to wear*

Here, James Joyce has a “stream of consciousness” style. In the 40 plus pages of this last chapter, if I am not mistaken, there are only two periods and one comma. This novel is considered one of the best novels ever written, but it is also one of the hardest to understand.

Here is an example of the opposite: the use of short sentences. This is Ernest Hemmingway’s *A Farewell to Arms*:

*He was dressed, wore his black boots, and his hair shone.*

*“Splendid,” he said when he saw me. “You will come with me to see Miss Barkley.” “No. “Yes. You will please come and make me a good impression on her.” “All right. Wait till I get cleaned up.” “Wash up and come as you are.” I washed, brushed my hair and we started.*

### **3.3.4.5. Prose: the novel – analysis of narration**

In regard to **narration**, there is first, second and third person.

First person *is I, we, my*, etc. and is more subjective than third person. We only see things from that person's perspective, which is good because we can understand his/her inner thoughts, but there can be limits to a one-person perspective, and we don't know if that person is reliable or not.

Second person is rare,  
but gives a sense of  
immediacy to the text.  
It is unique but can be  
unnatural and strange  
if used too much,  
always saying “you”  
do this and “you” do  
that.

Third person is usually more objective. Third person is she, he, they, it, etc., and is generally more objective because there are different viewpoints. This point of view can be omniscient or partially omniscient.

Sometimes these styles are mixed in the same novel/ short story.

## Narration

- An example of first person narration is *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee.
- An example of second person narration is *Aura* by Carlos Fuentes.
- An example of third person narration is Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*.

### **3.3.4.6. Prose: the novel – analysis of theme**

Another step in deconstructing a novel is to consider its **themes**. These are the major overarching ideas like coming of age, justice versus family loyalty, change versus tradition, etc.

The **motifs** in a novel, details that repeat themselves (subject, idea, etc.), can have symbolic effect and add to the depth of the theme. Motifs can be sounds, ideas, actions, words, etc., like a moon, the creak of a door, a sigh, etc.

## **3.4.1. Prose: short stories – origins**

## Short stories – origins

The literary genre of the short story developed from ancient storytelling traditions (epic, romance) into framed stories (Boccaccio and Chaucer) of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. From there, through popular fairy and folk tales, like those compiled/ created by Charles Perrault (“Sleeping Beauty”, “Cinderella”, “Little Red Riding Hood”), and those of *Arabian Nights* compiled from Middle Eastern stories by Antoine Galland, for example, the genre gained popularity.

## Short stories – origins

It wasn't until the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the short story was a recognized and common literary genre. Washington Irving started the century with “Rip Van Winkle” and “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow”. In the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Edgar Allen Poe made the genre popular with, for example, “The Cask of Amontillado” and “The Pit and the Pendulum”.

## **Short stories – origins**

Examples of other early, international authors are Maupassant, Turgenev, Chekov and Arthur Conan Doyle. These 19<sup>th</sup> century short stories are primarily realist, especially because they coincided with the literary movement of Realism, but today, the genre is so diverse, it's hard put all short stories into one category. There are, however, some characteristics which most short stories share.

## **3.4.2. Prose: short stories – characteristics**

## **Short stories – characteristics**

Like the novel, we still need to consider: characters, plot, setting (time and space), narration, language, and themes. There is not enough time to develop these to a great extent in a short story like there is in a novel, so we read fragments of character or condensed, intensified events. The story might even start **in medias res**, right in the middle of the action.

## Short stories – characteristics

One of the most important characteristics for a short story is the **narration**. All the characteristics discussed in the novel on narration are also important in the short story, but with its unique intensity of focus and brevity of development, the short story's point of view, be it objective or subjective, first person or third, affects the readers' overall understanding of the other elements in play (theme, plot, etc.)

## **Short stories – characteristics**

Some of these may be repetition from previous sections, but review always helps. A short story:

- Prose fiction that can be read in one sitting
- The plot is much less complex than a novel, but contains many of the same elements
- There is little character development, sometimes little action
- Is often realist and gives us a snapshot of life

## Short stories – characteristics

- The setting takes in time, space and mood
- The plot is normally set up as exposition, development, climax, and denouement
- The conflict can be internal or external
- The characters are protagonists and antagonists, static (stereotyped) or developing.

## Short stories – characteristics

The **point of view** can be omniscient, as having access to the thoughts and understanding of characters.

- Omniscient limited: In third person, but we know only what a particular character knows
- Omniscient objective: In third person, going from person to person, recording what is seen and heard, but not entering in the thoughts of anyone.

## Short stories – characteristics

The **point of view** can also be

- First person: the story is told from the perspective of the protagonist or from another character. It is in first person and we know only what that person knows and thinks.
- Stream of consciousness: like we are in the head of the character with no syntactical restraints (like we saw with *Ulysses*).
- Innocent eye: the story is told from the perspective of a child, like in *Montana 1948* by Larry Watson.

## **3.5. Prose: essays**

# Essays

Let's take a look at different types of essays. After all, you might have to write one at the end of this exam.

## **Types of essays**

Speculative essay – it looks at ideas rather than explains them. It may not have an explicit thesis like the other types of essays do. It meditates on ideas – it is meditative. An interchange of narration and response may occur.

## **Types of essays**

Expository essay – an explanation or clarification of an idea or theme.

Students may be most familiar with this type of essay. There may be an element of narration to it, but definitely an element of argumentation.

# Types of essays

Persuasive essay –  
where the writer  
tries to convince the  
reader of her/his  
point of view.

# Types of essays

Analytical essay –

where a work of art,  
a play, a book, etc. is  
analyzed.

## Types of essays

Argumentative essay – where the writer argues that her/his opinion or theory about an issue is correct, *above the opinions of others on the same issue* (it is similar, but different from the persuasive essay in this way).

# Characteristics of essays

- Unlike novels and short stories, essays are non-fiction, thus the **form** is different. The writer is presenting an idea (non-fiction) and not telling a story (fiction)

## Characteristics of essays

- The **voice** is not that of a narrator, but the author herself who speaks to the reader.
- The **structure** is such that if changed, the essay would lose its meaning. The flow of logic and presentation of ideas follow a sequence best fit to its type.

## **4. Drama - about**

**Theater** is what we watch on stage. **Drama** is the script we read, that which the actors perform, the text that the **playwright** creates.

Drama is literature that actors perform, but it has many similarities to poetry and prose. The plays of Molière and Shakespeare, for example, are written in verse. The Spanish playwright Antonio Buero Vallejo has deep symbolism that could be found in many poems and novels. The use of language and literary devices is fundamental to all three literary genres.

Even though theater is a **mimesis**, an imitation of real life, actors perform (**enact**) on stage and interpret the drama. These interpretations may vary according to the actor and director of the play, but the **stage directions** (instructions in the text of a play to guide actors in their performance and directors in their overseeing) are more explicit in what they want to happen on stage.

## **4.1. Drama - plot**

The general structure of the **plot** is the same as with short story and the novel: *exposition, development, crisis* and *denouement*, as we have seen before.

The **exposition**, when things are established in the beginning, is crucial to the entire play. Here we discover the background information:

- Setting (place and time)
- Events that have already occurred important to the plot
- Information about the characters

This can be done through a narrator that tells us information that happened before the plays, through the dialogue of the characters, via flashbacks, thoughts or other means of stage direction.

The **development** (rising action) of the plot, is the longest part of the plot and the most important because they set up the series of events that lead to the climax.

These events are not supposed to be predictable and complications arise that make the play interesting. Sometimes new information is presented or there is a plan that fails, but these elements should create a **crisis** that will push the development to a point of confrontation.

This point of confrontation is the **climax**, when the crisis reaches its high point. This is where things are revealed, understood, or actions are taken that change the course of events. This culmination of events changes the main character's fate. If it's a tragedy, what was going well turns for the worse; if it's a comedy, things usually turn for the better.

After the climax, there is the resolution, for good or bad, depending on what type of play it is. The mid-stage of this process is often called the **falling action**, when the tensions between the protagonist and the antagonist settle, with one winning over the other.

And the final stage is the **denouement** (*untying*) of events, where the conflicts find their **resolution**. Here, readers can experience a sense of **catharsis**, or release of emotions and tension.

As mentioned, in the crisis there is a turn of events: in the resolution in a comedy the protagonist has a happy ending and the antagonist may become “good”; in a tragedy, the protagonist(s) may die or suffer loss.

To see **examples** of this, think about the **comedy** *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in which the lovers are united in the end and the enemies reconcile. Now think about a **tragedy**, *Romeo and Juliet*, in which the two protagonists die at the end of the play.

## **4.2. Drama - characters**

In regards to the **characters** of drama, as in the novel and the short story, we have the *protagonist* and the *antagonist*. That person might be *individualist* or *representative* of a larger group or actions.

Traditional characters are supposed to act within the restrictions of their social class (**decorum**).

We also have **foil** characters, which serve as a contrast to make the protagonist's characteristics stand out.

We also have the **stock characters** for the background, those that fulfill a stereotypical or archetypical role and that are known for their flatness and lack of development.

We also have a **narrator**, which can be embedded in the background to serve as a communicator between the action and the audience. In older plays, particularly the Greek tradition, this might serve as the **chorus**.

## **4.3. Drama - theme**

In regards to the **theme** of play, there are universal objects, regardless of the time and space of the drama (setting), with which we as spectators/ readers can identify. We recognize characters like ourselves, and their outcome could be a warning or a prediction of our own future actions.

## **4.4.1. Drama – types of plays: comedy**

The tradition of **comedy** is to entertain the audience and see a happy ending. There is **low comedy**, which highly depends on action and is humorous and **farcical** with sometimes vulgar humor, and **high comedy**, which has a more sophisticated plot and language, with a dialogue that involves wit and “polite” interactions.

There are several types of comedies. The **romantic comedy** involves love and a happy ending. This is common in Shakespeare and in the Elizabethan tradition, like in the aforementioned *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

There is the **comedy of manners**, which deals with upper-class society, like, for example dandies, jealousy, frivolity, etc. An example of this is *The Conscious Lovers*, by Richard Steele, characterized by exaggeration and melodramatic effect.

There is also the **tragicomedy**, a cross between tragedy and comedy that contains elements of both. It can be tragedy with some comic relief, for example, or a tragedy with a happy ending. An example of this is Anton Chekov's *The Cherry Orchard*.

The **sentimental comedy** has both sentimental tragedy and comedy, and is characterized by interactions of extreme emotional expression and pity. An example of this is Ben Johnson's *Every Man in His Humor*, a play of suspicions and suppositions.

## **4.4.2. Drama – types of plays: satire**

**Satire** is an across-the-board mode that can be seen in drama, poetry, fiction and non-fiction. It is a literary mode that uses humor, ridicule and irony to expose, criticize or denounce evil, stupidity and vices of people, institutions or beliefs, usually in politics or other contemporary issues. In the literary genre of drama, this would correspond to *high comedy*.

**Satire** uses irony, parody, hyperbole, understatement, sarcasm, wit, inversion and other literary techniques. Let's run through these characteristics (some we have already seen):

- Irony – using opposite language to create effect (ex- WWI was the “war to end all wars”)

- Parody – an exaggerated imitation of a writer, artist or genre for comic outcome (ex – *Don Quixote* is a parody of the chivalric novels)
- Hyperbole – exaggeration (ex – “I have a million things to do today”)

- Understatement – presenting something as smaller or less important than it is (ex – describing a gunshot wound as a “scratch”).
- Sarcasm – mocking with irony (ex – “Where is the flood?” If someone wears pants that are too short.)

- Wit – mental sharpness and inventiveness
- Inversion (anastrophe) – the normal order of words is reversed to attain a desired meter or effect (ex – “To class, I will go”).

An example of a modern satire that is easily understood is Bert V. Royal's *Dog Sees God: Confessions of a Teenage Blockhead*. The name alone says a lot, but it's a satire of the famous *Peanuts* characters by Charles M. Schulz, showing the characters how they are when they grow up. You can imagine how some of these characteristics of satire come alive in this play.

### **4.4.3. Drama – types of plays: tragedy**

A **tragedy** is characterized by a series of tragic events and an unhappy ending, and the protagonist usually suffers or dies as a result. Sounds depressing, but it has an ulterior function. A tragedy, as Aristotle defined it, should provoke an emotional response in the audience (reader), one of compassion, for example, to create a **catharsis**.

In a tragedy the **tragic hero** is traditionally a noble and upright figure that has a **tragic flaw** (also called **hamartia**) which is often **hubris** (personal pride) or a lack of judgment, which leads to a culminating catastrophe.

Although the ending is tragic and seemingly depressing, the protagonist is redeemed in some way, and the audience learns from his/her faults, thus restoring order to any universal concept of “good” or “truth”.

The tragedies stem from the Greek tradition, most known with Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides. Perhaps the most known in *Oedipus Rex* by Sophocles.

Of course, tragedies have been written ever since. William Shakespeare well known for some of his tragedies, especially *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*. Perhaps the most popular modern tragedy is *Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller.

#### **4.4.4. Drama – types of plays: historical drama**

The **historical drama** is a drama about a famous historical figure or event. Shakespeare wrote many of these, like *King Lear* and *Henry V*.

Since Shakespearean times there have been many historical dramas, but many, if not most, are nationalistic and biased.

## **4.4.5. Drama – types of plays: modern drama**

With **modern drama** we see a whole new type of play that involve scientific, social, psychological and artistic elements previously undeveloped in Western thought. This type of drama emerged toward the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and evolved well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Some **modern playwrights** that pertain to this type of genre are Tennessee Williams, Henrik Ibsen, George Bernard Shaw, William Butler Yeats, Samuel Beckett, Oscar Wilde, Jean-Paul Sartre, Eugène Ionesco, Fernando Arrabal y Federico García Lorca, to name a few.

Modern drama stretched the limits of thought and expression to try to define reality, or give it new meaning. An emphasis on **Realism**, like with Ibsen, strove to seek truth or denounce realities. **Naturalism**, which stemmed from realism, shows frames of life thorough predominately a “scientific” observation of the vices of the lower class.

Here are some examples of  
more modern popular works  
that I suggest you read  
(partial international  
selection):

Tennessee Williams  
*A Streetcar Named Desire*

Henrik Ibsen  
*A Doll's House*

George Bernard Shaw  
*Man and Superman*

Samuel Beckett  
*Waiting for Godot*

Oscar Wilde  
*The Importance of Being  
Earnest*

Jean-Paul Sartre  
*No Exit*

Eugène Ionesco  
*The Rhinoceros*

Federico García Lorca  
*Blood Wedding*

Arthur Miller  
*Death of a Salesman*

With the **avant-garde** movement and fin-de-siècle restructuring of Western thought, there is much more abstraction and expressionist thought (think of comparing it to how painting developed at the same time).

Historically, think about how Freud, Darwin, Einstein, Marx and Nietzsche tore down the pillars of traditional Western thought and left us blazing through the rubble of post-industrial urbanism. How would you react?

## **4.4.6. Avant-garde connections**

Sigmund Freud – 1900

Charles Darwin – 1859

Albert Einstein – 1920

Karl Marx – 1867

Nietzsche - 1886

PSYCHOLOGICAL  
experiments – T.S. Elliot

EXISTENTIAL thought –  
Albert Camus, Samuel  
Beckett

SOCIALIST literature –  
John Steinbeck and  
George Orwell

SOLIPSISM – César  
Vallejo, Samuel Beckett

EXPERIMENTAL –  
André Breton, David  
Foster Wallace

SYMBOLIC thought –  
Charles Baudelaire and  
William Butler Yeats

## **5. Writing the essays**

Some colleges may require that you do this section. Check with the schools that interest you to see if this is the case.

There are two 45-minute essays:

- in one you analyze a short poem
- in the other you apply a “generalization about literature” to a short story, play or novel that you have read.

For the first essay (analysis of a poem):

- Keep your eye on the time
- Make a rough outline
- Organize your ideas into clear paragraphs
- Think of one idea with different details. Each detail can be presented in a paragraph
- Use some literary terms you remember
- Use examples and cite them

For the second essay  
(analysis of something  
you already have read),  
in addition to the  
suggestions on the  
previous slide, you  
should:

- Select a text that you remember. It might take a minute to think of one. You can take one from a class you took.
- Give a general analysis within the guidelines that are given to you (it might be character development, recurring symbols, etc.)

# Remember:

- Time  
management
- Organization
- Examples

Make a rough outline:

I. Intro

A. Hook

B. Orientation

C. Focus

D. Thesis

II. Idea 1 on thesis

A. Detail

B. Example

C. Detail

### III. Idea 2 on thesis

A. Detail

B. Detail

C. Example

### IV. Idea 3 on thesis

A. Detail

B. Example

C. Detail

### V. Conclusion

A. Thesis revamp

B. Objectives review

C. Unhook

For the INTRODUCTION  
of the essay, funnel in  
the readers:

- Hook
- Orientation
- Focus
- Thesis

In the BODY of the essay, stay on track:

- Three or four paragraphs, each with one detail that is explained
- Stay on the idea of progressively proving your thesis
- Each paragraph should start with a topic sentence
- When giving examples, use a “sandwich” method to introduce, cite and explain examples.

In the CONCLUSION of the essay, funnel out the readers:

- Paraphrase/ restate thesis
- Repeat objectives
- Unhook